

How Allies Got Rumania In; Triumph for Grey's Diplomacy

Constantinople Is the Big Prize They Want

Capture of Turkish Capital, With Immediate Flow of Arms to Russia Through Straits, Great Aim of Slow and Patient Efforts by Entente to Open Way for Czar's Troops to Attack Sultan's Domain.

WINE AND WOMEN FACTORS AT BUCHAREST

Saloniki Army of 500,000 Kept Idle Ten Months While Men Were Needed on Western Front Just to Insure Rumania Against Danger From Bulgaria; Russia Gives Territory to New Ally for Chance to Win Age-Long Dream of Owning Golden Horn.

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LONDON, Aug. 19.—For many months the situation in the Balkans—the inactivity of the great allied army under General Sarraill at Salonica, the wirepulling at Bucharest and the mysterious behavior of the Greeks—has puzzled the world. For different reasons both alliances have hitherto discouraged attempts to make clear what has been going on, and no censorship during the past two years has been so strict as that exercised on Balkan news. Now that Rumania has commenced her general mobilization and her entry into the war is regarded both in London and Berlin as imminent, it is possible to explain certain puzzles of the war in the near east, and in addition this story will attempt to summarize the views current here concerning the next phase of the war, when the world's interest will be transferred from the Somme and the Dniester to the countries bordering the Danube. The writer does not pose as a prophet—the assumption made here that Rumania and Greece will fight within a few weeks is a safe one, because if they do not this story will not be printed.

Why has General Sarraill kept nearly half a million men entrenched before Salonica doing nothing all spring and summer while great offensives were in progress on all the other fronts? This puzzle has worried laymen and even artillerymen who did not know what was going on in the entente chancelleries and who knew only too well how badly they were needed on the western front the veteran troops and the immense mass of munitions deflected from the great offensives preparing in France to the inactivity of the entrenched camp in the Balkans. This is the answer:

Real Intention.
Sarrai's army of 12 French and ten English divisions, with several divisions of Serbians and enough Russians and Italians to lend an all-ally appearance to the expedition—perhaps a half million fighting men—was not sent to Salonica to fight a campaign by itself. There was never any intention of using up this splendid fighting force in attempting, against the opposition of four hundred thousand Bulgarians and perhaps many German and Austrian units, to force a way through the mountains and almost roadless Serbian and Bulgarian country up the three narrow and easily defended river valleys to the Danube. The task may have been possible, but Sir Edward, now Viscount Grey, the master mind of the entente, believed it unnecessary. Sarrai's army was massed at Salonica to draw Rumania and Greece into the war when they have been drawn in it will move and not before. Whether it still has to fight its way to the Danube or

whether Bulgaria realizes her hopeless position and makes peace or change sides, its task, with the help of the Rumanian army, is expected to be an easy one.

And I have been told on very high authority several times during the past few months that the real goal of the Salonica army, assuming Bulgaria attacked by Rumania and by Russian armies coming through the territory of the new ally, will be not the Danube, but Constantinople. The bearing of the Rumanian mobilization, upon the all-important Constantinople question will be considered later.

Clever Trading.
Aside from the personal wirepulling—the same game is played in a very different and vastly more decorous way, in Washington—the elements of the situation in Bucharest were these: King Charles and his government knew well that the importance of their support was worth many times the value of their half million soldiers because of their strategic position on the flank of hard-bested Hungary and between the millions of the czar and the straight road to the goal of Russia's dream of the centuries on the Golden Horn. They were determined to get their own price for that support. Rumania beholding an opportunity more dazzling than has confronted any small country in modern history, decided to annex not only the Hungarian province of Transylvania, containing three million "enslaved" brothers of her own race, but also to seek possession of some of the Russian province of Bessarabia, on her other frontier, populated by almost as

many Rumanians as is Transylvania. When the demand for Bessarabia was presented last autumn to the czar's minister in Bucharest, a diplomat here told me, and when the Russian envoy declared vehemently that to ask might Russia to give up a fertile province was unheard of and absurd. Prime Minister Briand cooled softly. "And would not Russia give up a little of that land of which she has so much?" he asked. The Russian minister was silent, for even then it was pretty evident that Russia's chances of getting to Constantinople, excepting through Rumania, were almost nil.

Will Reach Goal.
Now Rumania has decided, and is mobilizing. Diplomats here are "gossiping" to learn what is going on in the Russian capital. But from all I have been told in the past I consider it a virtual certainty that when the first soldier of King Charles crosses the frontier in the Transylvanian Alps, Rumania will have been guaranteed not only Transylvania if she can win it, but also all or part of the predominantly Rumanian section of Bessarabia.

Not was the question of territorial bargaining the only factor in the decision before Rumania made her decision. She had to be sure she was on the winning side. She must be certain that no Russian phalanx would have been told in the past I consider it a virtual certainty that when the first soldier of King Charles crosses the frontier in the Transylvanian Alps, Rumania will have been guaranteed not only Transylvania if she can win it, but also all or part of the predominantly Rumanian section of Bessarabia.

Then, if Rumania declined to come in, or was lured by Austria-German successes against Russia to join the Germans, Greece could remain neutral without having to risk much in a war against Germany and Venizelos would be disgraced and remain in private life. If on the other hand Rumania attacked Austria and Bulgaria, Venizelos could be recalled to power, the pro-German ministers and generals dismissed, and the Greek nation precipitated into the war by a man who throughout the whole affair had retained the confidence of London and Paris. Either way, Greece would be safe. If this explanation is correct, Venizelos may be in the saddle again when Greece takes the field against Bulgaria. I do not know for certain, but I believe it is the most plausible interpretation of the Greek situation just given, and the version of the middle at Athens is the most plausible of any that has come to my notice.

It may be asked why, if the Balkan theater of war so important that the entente tied up half a million men at Salonica, set aside five hundred ships to care for them, planned a great campaign in the Lombard region, and pulled every possible wire to get Rumania into the war? Suppose Bulgaria is crushed, Serbia restored, Transylvania occupied by Rumania, all these things best France and end the war?

The question whether a complete allied victory in the Balkans might decide the war is complex and controversial. There are those who declare Rumania's entrance into the conflict will mean the breakup of Austria within a few months, and that without Austria the Germans cannot hold out another year. Others believe I have recently met some of them on the western front—that Germany will be harder to beat than ever when her dreams in the east have crumbled. Austria is a more or less dismembered and forced out of the struggle. Germany, these men say, will by that time have retired nearer her own frontiers, and will defend against her many enemies a line from Cracow through Bohemia to Bavaria, country mostly mountainous and easy to hold with few men. A discussion of this question at present would be highly speculative, and, to say the least, premature.

The Big Prize.
But the compelling reason that led the entente to make such stupendous efforts and sacrifices to bring in Rumania—that led her for example to the defection of five hundred thousand men from the west front to Salonica in the hope of bringing into the war a country with only five hundred thousand soldiers of uncertain value—was without any question the necessity to take Constantinople. It has been felt ever since Turkey entered the war that before the dawn of victory for the allies the straits must be captured. This belief led to the rash and ill-considered attempt to force the Dardanelles first by sea power and then by Sir Ian Hamilton's heroic but ill-fated army. Germany also took a most serious view of the importance of Constantinople, and her victory in Serbia which opened a direct railway line to the Bosphorus was a severe blow to the entente.

The possession of the straits is now of even greater importance than in 1915, for the food problem in Europe is becoming more serious and the war has become more and more to depend on superiority in munitions. The opening of the straits to the Russian wheat crop will reduce the price of bread in London, and help to settle the very troublesome problem of Russian exchange and internal credit for Russia's export trade is almost paralyzed. Of far more importance, it will permit hundreds of vessels laden with cannon, rifles and shells to pass from England, France and America to Odessa and other Black sea ports. The great problem for Russia, in her effort next spring and summer to get the German invaders off her soil, will be to equip her men and overcome the German superiority in guns and shells, and with her inexhaustible munitions she can look forward to a fair prospect of victory over the declining numbers of Von Hindenburg if Constantinople is taken. If not, the unsatisfactory port of Archangel and the distant harbor of Vladivostok will again be congested with munitions which cannot be moved fast enough to meet the needs of the armies. The additional munitions that could come through the captured Dardanelles might easily determine whether 1917 is to be another year of deadlock on the main eastern front or witness the rout of the Germans.

Russia's Position.
So much for the material value of Constantinople to the allied cause. In addition to this must be reckoned the sentimental longing of Russia for the city, which is a political fact of importance. Has a won Constantinople, Russia will feel that she has won the war if only she can get the Germans out of her invaded provinces and is likely to prove moderate in her territorial demands elsewhere. There has been talk of a slow Russian progress through Armenia and Asia Minor which might eventually bring the armies of Grand Duke Nicholas to the Bosphorus, but this has been ridiculed by military men from the beginning. A 1,200 mile march of this description in a country without railways and with few roads, with the prospect of meeting a great Turkish army at its close, would be an impossibility. There are only two ways to take Constantinople if the straits cannot be forced by sea.

One way leads through Rumania and Bulgaria and was traversed by the Russian armies in 1878. Skobloff, camping within sight of the capital, was forced to withdraw by a British fleet. Russia, with Rumania on her

side, will again repeat his historic march if she can defeat Bulgarians and Turks and this time no English warships will say her arduous way. This fact has never been mentioned in parliament, but it is an open secret here that back in 1914 before the could sign the pact of London (showing herself not to make a separate peace, Russia extorted from Britain and France a secret agreement that neither would oppose her conquest of Constantinople, but would use every effort to help capture territory for Russia's benefit. I have been informed of the existence of this agreement by an authority whose knowledge is beyond doubt.

The Other Route.
The other possible route as was hinted earlier in this story, lies overland from Salonica through Macedonia and Thrace. Sea power could help the march of this army and guarantee its communications, and a swift collapse of the straits would almost certainly be followed by a sweeping march on Constantinople of all the allies engaged in the near east—Serbians, perhaps, excepted.

If General Sarrai, early next spring, finds it possible to lead his French, British, Russian and Italian contingents along the railway through Thrace while a Russian army comes down from the north, a strategic problem will be set the Turkish staff intrusted with the defense of Constantinople which may prove insoluble.

Some time ago, when the question of the possible entry of Rumania into the war was under discussion, a mem-

ber of the British cabinet answered the objections of a "weekender" who was protesting that "available strength should be concentrated in French and 'sideways' abandoned. He said: "When an army is unable to break through the line of its opponent, it tries to get around his flank. We are for the present unable to break through the German on either of the main fronts, and they have no flanks. We are wise, then, if we try to attack the enemy elsewhere, and if Rumania comes in the chance for a series of campaigns which will in effect flank the German empire will be afforded. "First we will get Bulgaria out of it. Caught between two fires, she may even quit without a fight, as she did in 1913. Then will come Turkey, exposed to attack through Thrace from Salonica and through Rumania from Russia, with Germany powerless to help her, despite the great consequences for us all that will follow the opening of the straits. And, finally, we can get at Germany, who will grow weaker as her allies and dupes are one by one cut off. The prospect is such a pleasing one, for we will have to wait a long time to square things with the principal enemy, but since we must win and win decisively, and since we have found that a speedy victory on the main fronts is impossible, we must take the slow, roundabout, but sure method."

She Was Honest.
The secret was out, and rang the bell. A particularly naive and naive.

looking bulldog assisted in opening the door. The dog stood his ground. The agent retreated slightly.

"Will that dog bite?" he asked.

"We don't quite know yet," the lady said. "We have only just got him. But we are trying him with strangers. Would you come in?"—The End.

Had to Obey Orders.

An old colored uncle was found by the preacher prowling in his barnyard late one night.

"Uncle Cathoon," said the preacher sternly, "it can't be good for your rheumatism to be prowling round here in the rain and cold."

"Doctor's orders, sah," the old man answered.

"Doctor's orders?" said the preacher. "Did he tell you to go prowling round all night?"

"No, sah; not exactly, sah," said Uncle Cathoon, "but he done ordered me chicken train."—Gazette.

Repentant.

"Before we were married," said wife reproachfully, "you used to bring me flowers or candy every time you called, but now—"

"Say no more about it," interrupted hubby. "Nobody regrets it more than I do."

The Society Whirl.

"I once went to the same circle with Mrs. DeStyler."

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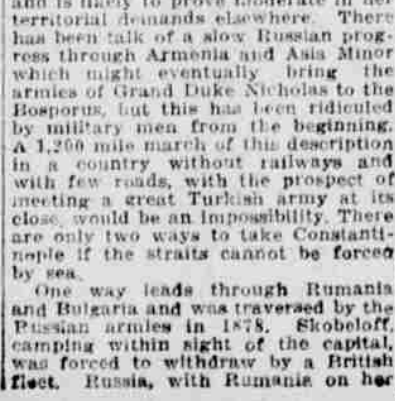
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